



Office of the Attorney General
State of Texas

DAN MORALES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 13, 1998

Ms. Judith A. Hunter
Paralegal
City Attorney's Office
City of Georgetown
P.O. Box 409
Georgetown, Texas 78627-0409

OR98-1930

Dear Ms. Hunter:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Open Records Act (the "act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 117476.

The City of Georgetown (the "city") received a request for information in offense report 95-15898, concerning an incident of indecency with a child charge. In response to the request, you submit to this office for review a copy of the records, which you assert are responsive. You state that the requested information may be withheld from disclosure pursuant to sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

We first consider whether the requested records contain information that may be confidential and excepted from disclosure under section 552.101, in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code. Section 552.101 excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." This section encompasses information protected by other statutes. Section 261.201(a) of the Family Code reads as follows:

(a) The following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under Chapter 552, Government Code, and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with . . . [the Family] code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:


(1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under . . . chapter [261 of the Family Code] and the identity of the person making the report; and

(2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under . . . chapter [261 of the Family Code] or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

The submitted information consists of documents which we believe to be "reports, records, communications, and working papers used or developed" in an investigation conducted under and subject to chapter 261 of the Family Code. Because you have not cited any specific rule that the city has adopted with regard to the release of this type of information, we assume that no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, the requested records are confidential pursuant to section 261.201 (a) of the Family Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 440 (1986) at 2 (predecessor statute). Consequently, the city must withhold the requested information pursuant to section 261.201(a) of the Family Code, in conjunction with section 552.101 of the Government Code.¹

As we conclude that the city must withhold the requested information based on section 552.101, we need not consider your section 552.108 claim. We are resolving this matter with an informal letter ruling rather than with a published open records decision. This ruling is limited to the particular records at issue under the facts presented to us in this request and should not be relied on as a previous determination regarding any other records. If you have any questions regarding this ruling, please contact our office.

Yours very truly,


Sam Haddad
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

SH/mjc

Ref.: ID# 117476

Enclosures: Submitted documents

¹We note that a parent of a *victim* of alleged child abuse or neglect may have a right to obtain from the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services portions of the information concerning a report of alleged abuse or neglect. Fam. Code § 261.201(f).